

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT

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*(Section of the Library Association)*

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HON. EDITOR: W. B. STEVENSON

Hornsey Public Libraries

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## Divisional Notes and News

**W**E hope to print in this section reports of Divisional Meetings and announcements of meetings to come. Will Divisional Secretaries please forward items for publication to the Editor? Copy for the next issue (July—August) should reach the Editor by June 12th.

**A.A.L. Jubilee Meeting.**—The A.A.L. celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, and a Jubilee Meeting will be held at Chaucer House on 4th July, at 2.30 p.m. This meeting will also be the Annual Meeting of the Association. Speakers will include:—

Mr. W. Benson Thorne, F.L.A.

Mr. Gurner P. Jones, B.A., A.L.A.

Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, F.L.A.

Mr. J. T. Gillett, F.L.A.

It is hoped that this meeting will be attended by as many members from the provinces as possible, for it is an important occasion. Tea will be provided.

**London Division.**—Joint meeting with the London and Home Counties Branch of the L.A., Chaucer House, 30th May, at 6.30 p.m. A tribute to the late Mr. L. Stanley Jast by Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers. Mr. W. Benson Thorne will preside.

**London Division.**—The Chief Librarian of Hammersmith has received a request from a student for permission to inspect the Hammersmith Libraries' collection of books from the Kelmscott and Doves Presses. These books were removed to a place of safety at the beginning of the war and are not very easily accessible, so before arranging for their transport to the Central Library, Hammersmith, Mr. Hunt would like to know whether any other students would care to take advantage of this opportunity of examining them. Will anyone interested kindly communicate immediately with Mr. Hunt in order that arrangements may be made for the volumes (which include the Kelmscott *Chaucer*) to be available on a date convenient to all concerned.

**Wessex Division.**—Meeting at the Public Library, Salisbury, Wednesday, 25th July,

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at 3 p.m. Speaker, Mr. F. E. Sandry, F.L.A., Borough Librarian, Edmonton, on "Professional Education."

**Wessex Division.**—Representative members of library committees and the teaching profession attended the 1945 Inaugural Meeting of the Wessex Division held at Southampton in March. The Mayor of Southampton, supported by the Chairman of the Southampton Public Libraries Committee, welcomed the members, and the address, "Public Libraries after the War," was given by Mr. L. R. McColvin, F.L.A., Honorary Secretary of the Library Association.

Mr. McColvin stated that the function of a public library is to make available to every man and every woman all the books necessary for each individual to build up successfully his personal life, and his life as a member of the community. Three great problems lay before us :—

1. How can science be best utilised in the interests of civilisation ?
2. How can we maintain true democratic government ? and—
3. How can we preserve the individual ?

To the end of solving these problems, the librarian has to play his part by making books, which have great influence, freely available to everyone. To-day there are too many inadequate library services, and the inadequate service is expensive. The standard throughout the country must be raised to the best now available, and from that point it must progress still further.

An adequate service is essential everywhere—proper book-supply, good staffing, and economical administration are required. The area of each library service must be large enough to ensure an adequate book supply, said Mr. McColvin, and suggested that eventually local government is likely to develop along the lines of larger areas. Though good work is now being done in some county systems, the town should be the core of the service. In the immediate future there could be better co-ordination between the county and the town, the county would supply local needs, and the town would be responsible for making available reference material and the services of specialist staff.

Continuing, Mr. McColvin said that there is a good case for government grants, which would help poorer areas and bring coercion on backward areas. Such grants would entail government inspection, but inspection can do no harm so long as the local authority wants to do the job properly, and authorities which do not want to provide an adequate library service should be compelled to do so. It is desirable that a separate government department be set up to deal with libraries.

Referring to the work of the Library Association, Mr. McColvin said that the L.A. Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee wished to see a nationally negotiated scale of salaries for librarians, and realised that any scale which does not provide for the grading of actual posts is useless. If such a scale is obtained, we must be prepared to give value for money, and the new syllabus and facilities for professional training would be a guarantee of this. The new syllabus brings the L.A. examinations down to the realities of librarianship and away from cramming. The librarian must be a sociable person because his work is with people, and he should have more time to meet members of the community. The new facilities for training would allow

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the assistant more leisure; and the time is now appropriate for commencing the full-time library schools.

Concluding his address, Mr. McColvin said that he anticipates a renaissance after the war. During the war, reading has increased because people have thought more, and are interested in new things. Reading is likely to increase still further; service members will return to swell the number of our borrowers, the new Education Act will have a beneficial influence on reading, new jobs will have to be learned, and as the housing question is solved, better home conditions will encourage people to read even more. The librarian must expect and plan for a greatly increased demand.



## The Spy Reports

J. W. Shaw

FIVE years I've been away from a public library. Five years away at the wars, five years from my chosen profession.

Has absence made the heart grow fonder? Most definitely, yes. That alone is not remarkable. Five million men yearn for civvy street again. But as regards librarianship, has the war period been any gain?

In one way, and probably one way alone, have I gained professionally. The long years of Home service between Dunkirk and Mulberry Harbour did give me a new insight into libraries—insight from the outside! Stationed in a long chain of towns, big, small, delightful and dismal, I used public libraries and saw them just as an ordinary member of the public.

Into many libraries I strode, incognito, just one of the public, though in khaki. Rarely did I divulge my connection with the profession, never did I reveal that I knew all the secrets of the staff enclosure, could work the complicated charging system as rapidly as any of them, know the best bibliographies on most things, and be quite aware of all that happened behind closed doors marked "Cataloguing—strictly private." I was a spy, there to learn. And I did learn, many things. First of all, what a blessing a good library is. For entertainment alone—the delight of a continuous and unlimited supply of books to suit every mood. Never any difficulty in getting the time over, if one was stationed within five miles of a library.

And, of course, the informative value. Endless weary barrack-room arguments; is Japan bigger than England? how far from Mandalay to Chungking? just how many Germans are there in the world? did they use machine-guns in the Boer war? All these could be settled in a few minutes by a call at the local library—if there was one. And the opportunities to spend spare time profitably. To read, not for simple pleasure alone, but for the more subtle, complex thrills of learning, of exploring all the universe. To undertake in casual, amateurish fashion, little lines of study in whatever took one's fancy—philosophy, elementary, numismatics—fragmentary, art—primitive, anything in which one's interest was aroused. Through five years of library haunting, I definitely know more about lots of quite un-military things than I did in the year of disgrace, '39.

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The sheer joy of browsing—intelligent, yet delightfully lazy pastime. Often the only permanently available adult pastime available in many quiet country towns or dreadful industrial areas. Half an hour in the local library almost invariably gave more pleasure than two hours of nonsense in the “flicks.” And browsing, like bed, has one great advantage—it doesn’t cost a cent.

Apart from books, what has one learned about library operation itself? Well, first of all, libraries *must* be light, bright, clean and airy. On a summer’s day they must reflect the sunlight without, and be fresh, cool and clean. No descending from sunlit streets into gloomy, dust-laden caverns, bookish labyrinths of mustiness. The best library, in summer, should be as attractive as an open-air cafe or a seaside pavilion. Librarians, when there’s sun around, get it into your building. Use flowers, bright colours, curtains, anything to trap and enhance the sun’s rays. Gloom is painful.

And on the dark winter nights, use electric light and the same bright colours, skilfully rearranged, to give warmth and cheerfulness, cosiness, a refuge from the dark and cold without. And now that the black-out is partly lifted, let your light shine on the world. Let people on the streets see inside your library—make them want to come in.

A further point—what a blessing is the universal Dewey classification. As a library assistant one often cursed it as pettifogging nonsense. No doubt many librarians could, if they wished, improve on Dewey. Making fancy classification schemes of one’s own is a favourite pastime in our profession—an alternative to noughts and crosses when things are slack.

Don’t do it. It’s a colossal convenience, an immense saving of time, to be able to visit almost any library in the land and find all the books in the same order, religion remorselessly following philosophy, useful arts inevitably followed by fine arts. One can be dropped by parachute in a strange library and go straight to the books without any preliminary fumbling. Though one has known good libraries that managed with other systems. Carlisle, for instance, does not use Dewey, but they have as bright and pleasant and modern a library as one could wish. The absence of Dewey is a slight handicap, and I never could fathom how they did arrange their books. Nevertheless, thanks to numerous, simple and conspicuous guides, one could find what one wanted quite easily, which shows a little care and intelligence can overcome most things.

Another favourite moan, in my not altogether felicitous cataloguing days, was that the Chief would have all catalogue cards perfectly typed, without either typed or ink alterations. One youthfully considered that all nonsense. From the public’s point of view, it isn’t. In these wartime paper shortage days, even the most august libraries permit ink alterations on their cards, and the result is definitely displeasing and irritating. A library must be professional—anything amateurish or improvised immediately lowers the prestige of the place in the eyes of we fickle members of the public, permanent or temporary.

Finally, the staff, at their best, must be pleasant, polite, but *not* fussy. If the reader asks for something—give it him, pleasantly, quietly and quickly. But don’t go chasing him, if he seems quite happy as he is. It is definitely annoying to be asked brightly, “Can I get you anything?” and to have to give the reply, “No thank you, I’m just wandering around.” It’s such an anti-climax, and makes one feel rather foolish. Don’t make the reader feel foolish—it’s bad for business.

Ten years ago, writing an article like this, one would inevitably have added a

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paragraph on the desirability of avoiding petty rules and regulations, red tape and so on. No doubt in James Duff Browne's halcyon days these were plentiful. But one is happy to report that in nearly all cases red tape was cheerfully conspicuous by its absence. In all really modern libraries, provided one is reasonably civilised, one seems able to do just what one likes, and that is quite as it should be. Though in not all. In one reference library one had the unpleasant, Gestapo-like experience of periodically glancing up from one's book, while browsing at the shelves, to discover a Himmler-like, but definitely feminine, face peering at one from round the stack corners, obviously suspecting, or perhaps hoping for, the worst. Very annoying. If your staff are going to snoop, see that they snoop efficiently, so that the victims never know.

A final grievance. Do let people know your library is a library. It's fatiguing to walk up and down the pavement for five minutes trying to decide whether a building is a library or merely the Town Club. And when one finally decides to enter, one discovers one has walked into a chapter of the Rechabites in full regalia!

## Some Notes on Indian Personal Names

B. I. Palmer

Considerable difficulty is often experienced by English library assistants in ascertaining under which part of his name an Eastern author should be entered. A name may be printed thus :—

M. Rangarajan Krishnamurti Ayer,

and no other indication being given, one is tempted to follow the Western tradition and enter under the last name as "surname," treating all other as "Christian" names. In order to understand the correct practice, it is necessary to know how the name is built up ; and from this the significant part of the name can be discovered.

Taking the example given above, and examining each part in order, we get :

- (1) M. — This is the initial of the author's birthplace, *e.g.*, Mylapore.
- (2) Rangarajan—This is the name of the author's father.
- (3) Krishnamurti—This is the author's personal name.
- (4) Ayer—This is a caste name.

To these may be added titles of respect (*e.g.*, Sri) or of merit (*e.g.*, Rao Bahadur or Rao Sahib) ; but the key to the person is in the personal name, and under this, normally, entry should be made. Unfortunately, names in India are in a state of flux, particularly among such as are writing, or otherwise appearing before the public eye, and so we find some who are using their caste names like Western surnames. Others go even further, and use part of their personal name as a surname, thus :—M.R.K. Murti. Happily for us, these are not common, and such names are unlikely to be passed on to future generations. So it can normally be taken that the personal name is the entry word, and caste names, such as Ayer, sometimes spelt as Iyer, or Ayyer, Ayengar, Sastri, etc., can be disregarded.

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The young assistant, desiring order above all things, may be tempted to wonder how such a confusing (to us) state of affairs came about, and why it cannot be altered. To understand this, it is necessary to glance back at the history of English names, and remind ourselves that in medieval times, Englishmen were known by personal names (or Christian names) only, with, where necessary to avoid confusion, such distinguishing epithets as "o' the Green," "the Miller," "the Smith," or "of York." In time, the "o' the," or "the" was dropped, and we had our Jack Green's, Joseph Miller's, William Smith's and so on, and we had added a new distinguishing name to each man to help mark him off from his fellows. There were many kinds of smiths, or metal workers—blacksmiths working in iron, whitesmiths in tin, silversmiths and goldsmiths. So, we have many people called Smith—so much so, indeed, that adequate identification of one of them needs some aid. In our own profession we have R. D. Hilton Smith, B. Oliph Smith, and F. Seymour Smith. As time went on, the surnames increased in number, and ceased to indicate such simple things as trades or locations; till now a man's surname is more effective than his Christian name in marking him off from his fellows.

India, too, has her caste (or "profession") names. Those I have given above are the three most frequent Brahmin names encountered in Madras. But the number of caste names is comparatively few, and it is a standing joke in India that every important man in Madras is either an Ayer or an Ayengar; I met four of the first within a few weeks of getting to Madras. These names, therefore, tell us very little about the person concerned. If they were used, for instance, for the telephone directory, probably 50 per cent. of the book would be devoted to the "a" section of the alphabet, and one would still need to know the personal name of the particular one wanted, in order to trace him. So why not use the personal name in the first place?

This brings us to a very important point in classification, and hence in cataloguing. In making a primary division of a group of objects into classes, we always choose first the characteristic which tells us most about the objects concerned. We choose a powerful tool which will most sharply separate one class from another, and both classification and cataloguing are concerned mostly in discovering the *Prepotent* characteristic, as Ranganathan calls it. (v. his "Theory of Library Catalogue," pp. 70-75.) There is a simple way of discovering which is the prepotent part of the names of our two communities. Take a *Who's Who* (British) and count up the recurrences of the surnames, and then of the various Christian names. If S is the average recurrence of a surname and C is the corresponding number of Christian names, if S is less than C, then S is prepotent. This is, of course, so in Europe; but the reverse is the case in South India, as a rule. Of course, there is plenty of confusion between two men of the same name in South India. Madras University, for example, had two Ranganathans (though the spellings varied slightly) but the difficulty is solved by using their initials to distinguish them.

This, then, is the reason why personal names must be used to index South Indian names: it is not inconvenient in indexing, once the rule is known; but it is the very device when one wishes to phone the son of a house and knows only the son's name. One of my friends was Desikan, but his father's name was Srinivasan. See "Rendering of Hindu names in headings: Function *Vs.* position" (by S. K. Ranganathan and K. M. Sivaramen)—*Modern Librarian*.

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### Valuations

M. L. Jackson

I HAVE never had a feeling for mass-observations and statistical surveys, being generally depressed by the large proportion of "don't-knows" or "indifferents," and prevented by unsound mathematics from appreciating the true import of percentages. I have generally disliked questionnaires as a fussy method of arriving at conclusions of doubtful importance or accuracy. However, the two reading surveys which have lately come my way have interested me, as they must have interested and enlightened the library committees under whose authority they were issued.

The first is "What St. Louis children read," giving a survey of a typical day (1st November, 1943) in the Children's Room of the St. Louis Public Library, and analysing the issue of 4,487 books taken out by 2,407 children, of which books, 1,111 were non-fiction, 1,767 fiction, and 1,609 story books and periodicals. So much one would have guessed, but the report goes on to describe the sending out of letters to 508 children (of whom 173 replied), and to quote from some of these spontaneous, lively replies. The letters asked the children how they chose the particular books which they borrowed on 1st November, whether they liked the books, what types of books they most enjoyed, and what of all the books they had read, were the five they most liked, and why.

Children are very positive in their enthusiasms, their adventure stories must be swift-moving, their villains truly wicked (not pathological cases), and their sad stories flooded with sorrow. They do not, as the report bears out, crave new books and best-sellers as such, and they cling loyally to old favourites. Consequently, books like *Little women*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Treasure island*, *Black beauty*, come high in the list of most-liked books. Study of the titles of all the books issued on that day shows that those stories are popular with girls which tell of young people whose life has been made uncertain by family difficulties, as in *Blue willow*. Among *Stories of other lands*, tales of England and South America head the list, though those of English life seem to be mainly the school-story type, and there is no mention of books like *Children of primrose lane*, which give a good picture of normal English children. Among the non-fiction books, no travel book on Great Britain was taken out, not surprising, considering the sad lack of good books of travel in Britain suitable for children. Personal conclusions—that these letters and enthusiasms show American children to be less painfully sophisticated than we are led to believe, and that "True Comics," lurid and strip-story, are not necessarily so praiseworthy because they present the doings of MacArthurs and Churchills.

The second reading survey comes from Leeds, and gives a study of issues from the Central Library on Saturday, 18th March, 1944. On that day, 1,151 questionnaires were distributed to readers who had out 3,170 books, and 215 of these questionnaires were completed. The result shows that these 215 vocal readers are satisfied with the library service, often full of praise for it, although they made several suggestions for its improvement. (I like the disapproval of "deadly biographies of discredited statesmen.")

We are not told how many of these 215 readers are men, how many "Forces" (for 65 of the 215 were not users of the library before the war) and how many in that large class "Housewife." 73 per cent. chose their books from personal predilection rather than outside recommendation. Analysis of the total issue of books on the 18th

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of March shows that more books were borrowed by men than by women, more classic novels by men, and that of all non-fiction subjects, the only two in which women borrowed slightly more than men were religion and catering.

There are a number of things which qualify most statistics about reading, and which are remembered when reading these figures. One is that quite often, only the husband in a family has non-fiction tickets; the wife, seeming to think it a sacred rite peculiar to the male, often has no non-fiction tickets in her own name, though she does not hesitate to borrow her husband's. Also, tickets are interchangeable between various members of a family.

Other things must be remembered when reading the appendix of non-fiction borrowed, where all the non-fiction is listed giving the occupation of the borrower of each particular title. The occupation of a reader generally has no bearing on his reading, though sometimes it is obvious that a particular book has been borrowed to help in a particular job, and one can sympathize with the porter who was reading two books on chiropody (or was it two porters?). Quite often, the occupation of the middle-aged is something quite accidental, and not akin to their interests, and the plumber who reads books on carnations is known to every librarian.

The last table. "Occupational analysis of borrowers on the day of survey" could give rise to a lot of sweeping conclusions—that teachers don't read classic novels, that journalists spurn all fiction, that policemen read only light novels, and that it takes three solicitors to borrow one fiction and one non-fiction book. The difficulty of classifying novels into three broad headings makes it seem more commendable to read Twain (classic novel) than Virginia Woolf (good modern novel), or P. G. Wodehouse (good modern novel) than Agatha Christie (light novel).

Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and the West Riding County Libraries have co-operated to produce a very good booklist on China, sufficiently informative, attractively produced, and not overburdened with titles. The list includes some novels about China, and some children's stories of life in China among which I'm sorry not to see Gleit's *Child of China*. *Meet America*, a booklist from Westthornton is framed on the "what can we put in" rather than the "what can we leave out" principle—a large, long list without dates, sub-titles, or any elucidation, so that Halsey's *With malice towards some* is lost in *American biography*. There is a list of novels, including Westerns, in which American authors are classified unhappily. Pearl Buck, Ferber, Prokosch and Sheean are linked together in "Social novel."

Cardiff's list, *Problems of population*, is useful and interesting, including informative articles from such periodicals as the *Eugenics Review*, *Nineteenth Century*, etc. I think the list, *Women and the home*, also from Cardiff, has too many books that are not sufficiently up to date. Much of Darling's *Modern domestic scientific appliances* has been replaced, and there are more attractive and useful books than Klickmann's *Modern knitting book*, 1915.

Swindon's booklist, *Target for to-morrow*, is a very attractive production, tastefully set up and illustrated. I am curious to know how many copies were produced, and to whom they were distributed. The list of books under the various headings gives a good introduction to the problems of planning for the future, though I am sorry not to see *Parents revolt* among books on population, nor Livingstone's *Education in a world adrift* among "Education," where it would be more useful than Happold's *Towards a new aristocracy*.



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*Fordwick*, the general booklist from Brentford and Chiswick, includes the article *Publishing in peace and war*, by Stanley Unwin. Hornsey's *Books of the month* is well printed and cheerful, listing worth-while books under arresting headings. It's a pity that Borodin's *Red surgeon* is unidentified in the list, whereas Footman's *Red prelude* has its explanatory sub-title. Bethnal Green's lists are as attractive as ever, though I see no reason for the long note about Noel Coward to *Middle-East diary*, when there is no indication whether Trilling's *E. M. Forster* is principally biography or criticism. Tottenham's booklist, as cheerful as ever, includes a useful list, *Industry in fiction*.

Liverpool has opened a new branch library to serve the residential district of Childwall. The furniture and fittings to the premises (a converted shop) were made by the libraries' own workmen, and this branch was opened within three months of the Committee's decision to rent the premises. Coventry's report for the two years ending March, 1944, tells how 60,000 books have been dealt with during the three and a half years since the loss of 150,000 by enemy action in 1940. The plan for post-war library development in the city provides for a central library, branch libraries and centres, and the Policy Advisory Committee have been urged to give early priority to the scheme. Aberdeen's annual report is as weighty as ever, giving full financial analysis for each branch. Lectures to children there have been successful, the first being an illustrated history of Aberdeen. I wonder if the term "Bespeaks" conveys anything to the Library Committee.

Islington tells how books are lent to the three youth clubs in the area because of the difficulties for young people in attending the libraries before closing-time. When the libraries have to close early, this, I suppose, is the best way of serving working young people, though the difficulties about such collections farmed out are: (1) they often encourage young people to "make do" rather than to turn to the libraries for greater scope in reading; (2) they scatter a valuable part of the stock which in these days of acute shortage can do most good by being centralized as much as possible.

Luton reports a total daily average of 3,158. A valuable hospital service is maintained at three hospitals, and a library for Youth has been started at the Youth Headquarters. This is a better idea than lending out collections to youth clubs, but I still feel that young people will best use their libraries by being encouraged to turn to them for all their reading, assisted by informative but friendly booklists distributed to the various clubs.

Margate's 21st annual report is very well printed and produced, and starts with a friendly, cheerful introduction from the Chairman of the Library Committee. At Margate, books on the progress of the war continue to be much in demand. This is an interesting point, for some libraries are finding that readers are not so concerned to read of war experiences and theories, preferring to get away from action and battle. That there has also been a 50 per cent. increase in the issue of "literary books" shows that Margate also wishes to escape into pure literature. The report includes a list of worth-while books which have been added to stock during the year (after reading a series of booklists, notes and blurbs, I grow weary of the unctuous flattery "for the discriminating reader.")

Lectures at Bristol have been given to a variety of topics, the Modern Novel, Youth, Nelson, The Film, and by such notable people as Rotha, Laski, and Francis Meynell.

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Both Bristol and Fulham issue an interesting programme of good lectures, complete with excellent short lists of suitable reading. At Finchley there has been an exhibition of drawings and prints by members of the Society of Graphic Arts, and at Islington an exhibition of the works of Islington artists, past and present, a notable company, including Roger Fry, Kate Greenaway, Pugin, Heath Robinson, and Sickert.

For nearly four years Croydon has sent a monthly news letter to forces serving abroad, and this is a valuable, friendly, and helpful series which must give immense pleasure to forces receiving the letters. As well as giving news of colleagues, there is professional news for people who so otherwise grow so quickly out of touch. The letter, written on the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the war, is particularly good for the helpful, constructive and sincere advice it gives about librarianship after the war.

The Memoirs of the Madras Library Association, 1944, include a lively presidential address by the Special Education Officer, Jarpur, who points out the value of contact with British and American librarians serving in the forces in India. Among the various articles there is a straight-talking one on Adult Education in India which, when discussing the place of education, says: "As things stand now in India the radio is only an organ of the government . . . it is partisan and one-sided . . . Broadcasts don't combine intellectual quality with popular appeal . . . one need not be sacrificed for the other . . ."



## Correspondence

The Editor, *The Library Assistant*.

Home Forces.

Sir,—

I was very interested in the provocative point of view expressed by Mr. Mann in the September—October *Assistant*. Though I do not share it, I agree that librarians in the Forces have been rather inarticulate; and their views on a matter which concerns them so closely are worthy of fuller expression.

I, too, had just passed the Intermediate before being called up; and I do not view with any relish the prospect, after five years or so in the army and with added domestic responsibilities, of returning to the weary grind of spare-time study. The proposal to run full-time library school courses has been a major factor in maintaining my enthusiastic determination to return to the profession.

Mr. Mann's suggestion, unless working hours are reduced to about twenty a week, will not radically differ from the present "system" of professional training. The evils of this system have been described by abler pens than mine. I will only add that the war-weary ex-serviceman will be far less able to settle down to it than when he was five years younger. He will, too, be all the more in need of his spare-time to renew and develop the cultural pursuits and social contacts which war has interrupted.

It is true that library authorities will be ill able to spare the returned men and women for library school instruction. But in the long run their interests will be better served by the more rapid production of a body of better trained assistants than would otherwise be possible. Mr. Mann's other objection is on the question of obtaining a proper balance between practical and theoretical work. Over a year's course, however,

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"vacation" work in all departments of a student's own or another library—together with the interim period before the start of the course—will prove just as valuable towards rounding off classroom studies as a longer period at reduced hours in his own, possibly more limited, job.

In one respect I entirely agree with Mr. Mann. The establishment of library schools will make possible a transformation of the Birmingham Summer School, away from the examination syllabus, and towards a wider and deeper outlook, akin to that of the American Library Institutes.

Yours, etc., P. M. DE PARIS.

Regional Branch Library,  
Sandbach.

The Editor, *The Library Assistant*.

28th February, 1945.

Sir,—

In the article "Why Classify?" Mr. Palmer states that owing to a different method of teaching, the younger generations will grow up with only a very faint knowledge of alphabetical order. Even if libraries turn to classification of books and catalogue, some form of indices will still be needed. For catalogue consultation at least, will not the reader find it simpler to learn his A B C than a more complicated classified scheme? The general reader being considered here as distinct from the student.

Again, we cannot get away from alphabetical order entirely, for author catalogues and fiction book arrangement demand it.

Yours faithfully, (Miss) N. A. WINDER.

The Editor, *The Library Assistant*.

M.E.F.

Sir,—

My experience of study overseas may be of interest to T. Mann and others. Owing to the absence of books, I did nothing for two and a half years, but when it became obvious that Sir James Grigg had no intention of reducing the army overseas tour much below five years, I got in touch with Mrs. S. W. Martin. She supplied me with, as it proved, a masterly list of nineteen books for Final, Part III. Of these, Mr. J. P. Lamb very generously was able to supply twelve from the Sheffield staff library; my wife purchased what she could of the remainder, and with Jast's *Library and the community* (on sale in Egypt) I am already assured of being able to cover in some measure all but one of the lessons of Mr. J. H. Davies' course. So far I have despatched four of the ten lessons, and received one back, the standard attainable being much more thorough than I had thought possible. On copyright, for instance, though I could not see Partridge (which I had read in 1938), I found information in Pafford, *Library co-operation in Europe*, and also in an old *Whitaker* in the station library.

As Mr. Mann suggests, no staff library could possibly supply more than one overseas student in any one subject, but like him, I believe such of my colleagues overseas as are not Fellows require for their diploma sections other than the one I am studying. Forces and other students at home will surely not resent having to borrow from the A.A.L. or Greenwood libraries, through this aid to their colleagues abroad.

On another point raised by Mr. Mann I quote Mr. Welsford's answer to my similar

## The Library Assistant

enquiry; "the rule that all parts of the Final examination must be taken and passed overseas is not now in force, so that it will be quite in order for you to sit. If you would prefer it, we would be pleased to make arrangements for you to sit for the examination while you are still in the Middle East Forces." There must be no suggestion that an overseas pass is less meritorious than one achieved in Britain. How the L.A. Council ensure that candidates sit under proper supervision, or circumvent unscrupulous friends who might send out copies of the papers by air-letter, I do not know; the only concession that should even be considered is to allow overseas candidates a wider choice of questions, six out of twenty perhaps, instead of six out of ten.

As regards library schools, I hope that the L.A. Council will implement the following statement from the McColvin report (p. 185): "tutors should not be members of the staff of any area in the library served by the school." With the best will in the world, those who have known the domination of the sergeant-major for five years, will not take kindly to the domination of former colleagues and juniors, particularly the ladies, promoted to professors of librarianship! Seniors aged forty and upwards could be excepted from the above rule.

My own concern is lest passing of the Final examination overseas, coupled with a degree, should be held to constitute that my career had *not* been interrupted, and invalidate me for consideration for a refresher course. I await full information of conditions of entry to the proposed library schools with interest.

Yours faithfully,

P. HEPWORTH.

### JUBILEE MEETING

Don't miss this meeting on July 4th at Chaucer House

*Full particulars on page 35*

## Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

### Forty-Ninth Annual Report

covering the period January-December, 1944

**Membership.**—The membership at 31st December, 1944, was 3,056—a net decrease of 152. While not so great a decrease as last year, the fact that the membership is steadily dropping cannot be regarded as a healthy sign. The distribution of members was as follows:—

## The Library Assistant

	Full L.A.	Transitional	Total
Honorary Fellows . . . . .	20	—	20
Central Association . . . . .	276	—	276
Divisions :			
Devon and Cornwall . . . . .	64	—	64
Eastern . . . . .	55	—	55
East Midlands . . . . .	200	1	201
Greater London . . . . .	710	13	723
Kent . . . . .	138	—	138
Midland . . . . .	353	—	353
North-Eastern . . . . .	207	23	230
North-Western :			
Bolton and District . . . . .	209	5	214
Liverpool and District . . . . .	169	6	175
South-Eastern . . . . .	55	1	56
South Wales . . . . .	123	—	123
Wessex . . . . .	125	1	126
Yorkshire . . . . .	276	26	302
	<hr/> 2,980	<hr/> 76	<hr/> 3,056

**Finance.**—The financial position of the Association continues to be satisfactory. The balance in the General Account remains at £325, the maximum allowed under the agreement made with the Library Association in 1939, according to which any balances in excess of this amount are refunded. The amount refunded in 1944 was £33 8s. 3d., compared with £40 9s. 5d. in 1943. This reduction in the refund is consequent on a reduction in the amount of capitation received from the Library Association (1942: £924 6s. 0d.; 1943: £736 16s. 0d.; 1944: 691 7s. 0d.), and is due to the removal from membership of defaulting members. An increase in the total cost of printing of the *Library Assistant*, because of higher printing charges, was offset by an increased income from the sale of A.A.L. publications.

The Correspondence Courses balance is now £116 7s. 0d, a slight increase on the previous year's figure of £114 19s. 0d. This balance is likely to be needed in the inevitable overhaul of Courses made necessary by the new Library Association syllabus.

**Benevolent Fund.**—One grant was made during the year, the first since 1939. The Council naturally regrets the circumstances which cause demands on the Fund, but is most anxious that the Fund should be used for the purpose for which it was founded. Divisional Committees and individual members are again reminded of the existence of the Fund, and are asked to notify the Council at once of any necessitous cases.

**Correspondence Courses.**—There has been an increase in the use made of the Correspondence Courses throughout the year. The students for the ordinary courses numbered 561, an increase of 36 on last year, and for the revision courses 74, an increase of 3. It is particularly gratifying that no less than 43 ordinary courses were sent to Service members, an increase of 12 on last year, together with 3 revision courses. Part of the cost of courses to Service members has once again been borne by the Library Association. Special mention must be made of the fact that 2 courses have been sent to Lieut. A. L. Smyth, a prisoner of war in Germany.

## The Library Assistant

The following tutors have had to resign during the year :—Miss H. Palfreyman (Elementary), Mr. S. G. Saunders (Intermediate, Part 1), Miss F. E. Wigley (Final, Part 1). Two new tutors have been accepted for the Elementary Course during the year : Miss H. M. Butt and Miss J. Lee White ; two for the Intermediate : Miss D. K. Bull and Mr. E. Simpson, and one for the Final, Part 1, Miss M. Lovell, B.A. Mr. G. R. Micklewright has rejoined the Panel for Intermediate, Part 1, on his discharge from the Services. In full realization of the extreme difficulty of conducting war-time courses, the Council would like to thank all tutors for their service to the Association.

The Council would also like to record its appreciation of the efficient manner in which Mrs. S. W. Martin has continued to carry on the organisation of the courses.

**Library.**—During 1944 57 volumes were added to the Association's library. Of this total, 16 were new titles and 41 were duplicates or new editions : 36 volumes were purchased at a cost of £30, and the remainder were donations. Issues for the year increased by 256 to 2,508, although the number of students using the library, 168, showed a slight decrease.

Once again the Council wishes to record its gratitude to Mr. L. J. Packington, Chief Librarian of Lambeth, for continuing to allow the collection to be housed at the Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, S.E.24, and to Miss B. F. Nevard for the efficient way in which she has carried out the duties of Hon. Librarian.

**Divisions.**—War-time space limitation does not permit the inclusion of full Divisional Reports, but these may be obtained from Divisional Secretaries.

Most Divisions seem to be in an extremely healthy state. Three Divisions (Kent, Midland and Wessex) have even managed to increase their membership.

All Divisions except the Eastern have held meetings during the year, in some cases in conjunction with Branches of the Library Association. In the first part of the year most Divisions continued discussions on the Library Association's Post-War Proposals and on the Suggestions for Future Professional Training, as a result of which several recommendations were sent forward to the Library Association. Among the other professional topics discussed were Children's Libraries and Children's books (East Midland, Greater London and Yorkshire) : libraries of other countries, particularly America and New Zealand (Greater London, Kent and Wessex) : and library service in war-time (Wessex). Papers have also been given on The novel in France (Kent) and Prison houses of England (Yorkshire). Several Divisions have not been satisfied with ordinary meetings and the Reports show some educational visits, Brains Trusts, a film show, and a ramble. Educational activities have continued, and the Wessex news letter is flourishing. The Council wishes to express its gratitude to all Divisional officers and members of Committees, to all individuals and to all library authorities whose efforts throughout the year have contributed to the success of all these activities.

**Publications.**—Although no additions to the A.A.L. series have been made during the year, it is hoped that the new edition of *Sequel stories* now being edited by Mr. Gardner will appear during 1945. A new and revised edition of Phillips' *Classification* is also in preparation. *The Library Assistant* continues to be published with six issues a year, and thanks are due to contributors and correspondents for their continued interest in the journal.

## The Library Assistant

**Officers and Council.**—There have been several changes in the Officers and Council in 1944 : a new President, Mr. J. T. Gillett, of Leeds ; a new Hon. Treasurer, Mr. E. Wisker, of Gillingham, and a new Hon. Membership Secretary, Miss M. E. Pitts, of Willesden. We should like to express our gratitude to Miss M. B. Jones, of St. Pancras, the retiring Hon. Membership Secretary, for all her hard work in this most difficult post. The new National Councillor was Miss W. Heard, of Chiswick, in place of Miss D. Chilcot, whom we thank for her service to the Council.

There have been three Council meetings during the year, the flying bomb menace from June onwards rendering it undesirable to hold more. The main topics discussed were the Library Association Post-War Proposals and Suggestions for Future Professional Training. The President and the Hon. Secretary attended the Branch and Section Conference of the Library Association at Oxford in December.

**The Future.**—As these words are written, there are signs that the end of the war is not far distant, and we may look forward with confidence to the early return to civilian life of our members in the Forces. They will find, when they come back, not a skeleton organisation, but an Association almost as live and active as when they temporarily left it. When the war broke out in 1939, there were fears, in the prevailing uncertainty, that the A.A.L.'s activities would be seriously curtailed. That, happily, has not been the case. Throughout almost the whole of the war period the Council has met regularly, and most of the Divisions have carried on normal activities in a most praiseworthy manner, often under extreme difficulties. There has been important work for the Council and Divisional Committees, including examination of the various proposals of the Library Association for the post-war re-organisation of the library service, and putting forward the views of the younger librarians on them. This has been done with some measure of success. The future must, indeed, be bright for an Association, which, during the difficult war years, has been able to carry on its work so successfully, and, at the same time maintain its democratic traditions, as the A.A.L. has done.

In 1945 the Association will reach the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, a landmark in its history which will be appropriately celebrated. Whatever the future may bring, and great changes are likely, this can be confidently predicted, that the A.A.L. will not willingly yield its independence, or sacrifice any of the traditions which have been so worthily built up during its long and useful history.

On behalf of the Council,  
J. T. GILLETT, *President.*  
ELSIE M. EXLEY, *Hon. Secretary.*

# Statement of Income

		<i>Income</i>		<i>£ s. d.</i>		<b>GENERAL</b>	
						<i>£ s. d.</i>	
To Balance brought forward from 1943	.	.	.	.	.	325	0 0
„ Subscriptions	.	.	.	.	.	17	14 0
„ Capitation Grant	.	.	.	.	.	691	7 0
„ Sales : <i>Library Assistant</i>	.	.	.	.	.	32	16 0
„ A.A.L. Publications	.	.	.	.	.	28	12 4
„ Advertisements	.	.	.	.	.	44	19 0
„ Miscellaneous	.	.	.	.	.	0	5 10
						815	14 2

£1,140 14 2

		<i>Income</i>		<i>£ s. d.</i>		<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>	
						<i>£ s. d.</i>	
To Balance brought forward from 1943	.	.	.	.	.	114	19 0
„ Students' fees	.	.	.	.	.	923	11 0
„ Balance of Students' Fees for Members in the Forces paid by the L.A.	.	.	.	.	.	28	18 0

£1,067 8 0

		<i>Income</i>		<i>£ s. d.</i>		<b>BENEVOLENT</b>	
						<i>£ s. d.</i>	
To Balance brought forward from 1943	.	.	.	.	.	377	5 9½
„ Interest on Post Office Savings Bank Account	.	.	.	.	.	1	6 2
„ Appreciation in value of National Savings Certificates, 1st January to 31st December, 1944	.	.	.	.	.	8	19 4

£387 11 3½

## STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

		<i>Assets</i>		<i>£ s. d.</i>		<b>BENEVOLENT</b>	
						<i>£ s. d.</i>	
To National Savings Certificates : Value 31st December, 1944	.	.	.	.	.	331	13 5½
„ Post Office Savings Bank	.	.	.	.	.	35	17 10

£367 11 3½

All the above statements audited and found correct :

(Signed) M. L. JACKSON } *Honorary Auditors.*  
E. N. BROWN }



# and Expenditure, 1944

## ACCOUNT

	<i>Expenditure</i>	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Printing <i>The Library Assistant</i>		372	8	6			
" Distributing <i>The Library Assistant</i>		44	5	8			
" Payments to Divisions		156	0	3			
" Councillors' Expenses		80	2	8			
" Library		30	2	8			
" Stationery and Printing		15	9	9			
" Postages		7	11	5			
" Refund of Capitation to L.A.		33	8	3			
" Clerical Assistance for Honorary Officers		47	6	0			
" Parcels for Prisoner-of-War Members		21	14	6			
" Miscellaneous		7	4	6			
					815	14	2
Balance carried forward to 1945					325	0	0
					<u>£1,140</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>

## COURSES ACCOUNT

	<i>Expenditure</i>	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Tutors' Fees		875	3	0			
" Refund of Course Fees		2	18	6			
" Stationery and Printing		16	2	6			
" Honorary Education Secretary : Clerical Assistance and Expenses		31	14	0			
" Postages		16	0	0			
" Insurances		0	15	0			
" Course Editors' Fees		8	8	0			
					951	1	0
Balance carried forward to 1945					116	7	0
					<u>£1,067</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>

## FUND ACCOUNT

	<i>Expenditure</i>	£	s.	d.
By Grant		20	0	0
" Balance carried forward to 1945		367	11	3½
		<u>£387</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>3½</u>

## FUND ACCOUNT

	<i>Liabilities</i>	£	s.	d.
AS ON 31st DECEMBER, 1944		367	11	3½
By Balance of Fund, 31st December, 1944		<u>£367</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>3½</u>

ERNEST WISKER, *Hon. Treasurer.*

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*Matters relating to Correspondence Course and A.A.L. publications to the Hon. Education Secretary. Orders for THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT, advertisements, etc., to the Hon. Treasurer. Enquiries relating to membership and delivery of THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT to the Hon. Membership Secretary. All other enquiries to the Hon. Secretary.*

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